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DULVERTON RURAL DISTRICT

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR 1937

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

AND THE

SANITARY INSPECTOR

GREGORY & SON, PRINTERS, TIVERTON

TO THE

CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS

OF THE

DULVERTON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit to you my Report on the Health of the Dulverton Rural District during the year 1937.

My headings are those formulated by the Ministry of Health.

COUNCIL MEMBERS FOR THE YEAR 1937.

Chairman:
Col. H. W. H. Amory, Hele Manor, Exbridge, Dulverton.

Vice-Chairman:
Mr. H. Williams, Great Ash, Winsford.

Col. E. R. Clayton
Mr. F. Goss
Mr. W. Perry
Mr. W. Summers
Mr. W. I. Reed
Mr. A. French
Mr. J. G. Hannaford
Mr. S. J. Westcott
Mr. T. Price
Col. V. A. Coaker
Mr. C. F. Avery
Mr. H. Govier
Mr. P. S. Knight
Mr. J. F. Clatworthy
Mr. A. V. Norman

Clerk to the Council:
E. G. C. Chapman, Esq., Solicitor, Clerk.

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS OF THE AUTHORITY.

(a) Part-time M.O.H.:

G. NICHOLSON, M.D., D.P.H., F.R.C.S., E.

District M.O. and Public Vaccinator: Dr. McKINNEY.

(b) Sanitary Inspector, Etc.:

H. A. JEWELL, A.R.San.I., M.Inst.S.E., M.S.I.A.

STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area in Acres	78,159
Population, 1937 (estimated)	4,449
Inhabited Houses	1,170
Number of Inhabited Houses according to Rate Books	1,248
Number of Families or Separate Occupiers	1,248
Rateable Value (Reduced)	£18,073
Sum Produced by 1d. Rate	£70

Social Conditions.—Good. The vast majority of the inhabitants are engaged in agricultural pursuits; they appear to be exceptionally healthy in consequence.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR 1937.

		Total	M.	F.		
Live Births	Legitimate	59	24	35	Birth Rate	12.4
	Illegitimate	7	4	3		
Still Births		2	1	1	Rate for 1,000 total Births	30.3
Deaths		68	49	19		
					Crude Death Rate	13.0
					Corrected Death Rate	11.0
Number of women dying of or in consequence of Childbirth		Nil			From Sepsis	Nil
					Other Causes	Nil
Rate per 1,000 Births						Nil

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age:—	
All Infants per 1,000 Live Births	30.3
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births	33.8
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births	Nil
Deaths from Measles	Nil
,, ,, Whooping Cough	Nil
,, ,, Diarrhœa (under 2 years)	Nil
,, ,, Cancer	6

The Statistics for England and Wales were—Rate per 1,000 of the Population:

Births—Live Births	14.9
Still Births	0.60
Deaths	12.4
Death Rate per 1,000 Births (under the age of one year)	58

The maternal mortality for England and Wales are as follows:

	Puerperal Sepsis	Others.	Total
Per 1,000 Total Births	0.14	2.17	3.11

SOME CAUSES OF DEATH.

Pulmonary Tuberculosis	1	Pneumonia	2
Other Tuberculosis	2	Digestive Disease	1
Cancer	6	Nephritis	1
Cerebral Hæmorrhage	4	Suicide	1
Heart Disease	16	Other Violence	2
Other Circulatory Disease	1	Puerperal Disease	0
Diabetes	1	Premature Birth	0
Senility	6	Influenza	2
Bronchitis	2	Encephalitis Lethargica	1

As will be seen from the above there has been no unusual mortality during the year.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

1. Nursing in the Home.

(a) Nursing is provided by the Somerset District Nursing Association. There is no co-ordination with the Sanitary Authority.

(b) Infectious Diseases. No Provision.

2. Midwives. None employed or subsidised by the Local Authority. Number of Midwives practising in the Area, 6.

3. Arrangements for the carrying out of Pathological and Bacteriological investigation, Analysis of Food Stuffs, etc., are made with the Somerset County Laboratories.

Legislation in Force: No change during 1934.

4. Hospitals. There are no Hospitals of any description within the Area.

Hospital Accommodation for Infectious Diseases.—No change.

5. Maternity and Nursing Homes. No action has been taken under the Nursing Home Registration Act of 1927.

6. Cases of Maternal Mortality and Puerperal Pyrexia are investigated by the County Authority.

7. There is no provision for Unmarried Mothers, Homeless Children or Illegitimate Infants in the Area.

8. Institutional Provision for the Cure of Mental Defectives. None in the Area.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

1. Water Supply.

(i.) Every effort is being made to give each Village a good water supply. To date nine of the largest Villages have main supply.

Samples were taken by the Sanitary Inspector in various Parishes during the year, and the results of these are set out in his Report.

2. Drainage.

A Scheme is in preparation for sewerage and sewage disposal for the Village of Exford. This is badly needed and it is hoped that a start may be made with the work in 1938. The Works at Dulverton should be modernised as soon as possible.

3. Rivers and Streams Pollution. No action was considered necessary.

4. Closet Accommodation. This, in many parts of the Area, is still very primitive but is rapidly being improved.

5. Schools.

(i.) Kingsbrompton, Dulverton and Brushford are the only Schools having flush lavatories. Exton, however, has a piped water supply. There is still room for a great deal of improvement in the sanitary arrangements to the remainder and the matter has been taken up with the Authorities concerned.

(ii.) Public Cleansing. See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

(iii.) Sanitary Inspection of the Area. See Sanitary Inspector's Report.

(iv.) Eradication of Bed Bugs. No action has been required up to the present.

HOUSING.

As will be seen from the detailed report, real progress has been made during the last three years in this connection.

(See Sanitary Inspector's Report).

The examination of Milk for tubercle bacilli is carried out at the County Laboratory.

Meat and Other Foods.—(See Sanitary Inspector's Report).

Adulteration.—The Council are not a Local Authority for enforcing the Food and Drugs (Adulteration Act), 1928.

Chemical and Bacteriological Examination of Foods are submitted to the County Council Laboratory at Taunton.

PREVALENCE AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

During 1937 Dulverton had cases of notifiable infectious diseases other than Tuberculosis.

Vaccinations.—No vaccinations have been carried out by the M.O.H. during 1937.

Notifiable Disease (other than Tuberculosis):

	Total cases notified.	Cases admitted to hospital.	Deaths
Small Pox	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	1	1	—
Diphtheria	1	1	—
Enteric Fever (including Paratyphoid)	—	—	—
Puerperal Fever	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	1 (aged 29)		
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	—	—	—
Cerebro-spinal Meningitis	—	—	—
Dysentery	—	—	—
Malaria	—	—	—
Pneumonia	7	—	3
Acute Poliomyelitis	—	—	—
Encephalitis Lethargica	1	—	—
Other Diseases notifiable locally, e.g., Chicken Pox:	2	—	—
Erysipelas	—	—	—

Ages.—The scarlet case was aged 18.

The case of Diphtheria was believed to have been caused by a carrier, who was dealt with satisfactorily.

Pneumonia.—Of the cases of the above:

Under one year	3 cases
1 year to 2	1 case
2 years to 3	1 ,,
3 years to 4	0 cases
6 years to 7	0 ,,
10 years to 15	0 ,,
20 years to 35	0 ,,
34 years to 45	1 case
45 years to 65	0 cases
Over 65 years	2 cases
Total	8 ,,

Cancer.—There were six deaths from this disease in 1937.

(b) Prevention of Blindness.—No action was taken.

TUBERCULOSIS.

New Cases and Mortality during 1937.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non-pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0								
1				1				
5								
10								
15								1
20								
25		3						
35		1			1			
45						1		
55								
65 & upward					1			
Totals..	0	4	0	1	2	1	0	1

Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925.—No action taken.

Public Health Act, 1925 (Section 62).—No action taken.

My thanks are due to Mr. H. A. Jewell for his assistance in compiling this report.

I have the honour to be

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE NICHOLSON,

Medical Officer of Health.

1937.

SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT

To the Chairman and Members of the Dulverton Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen.

I beg to submit my report for the period from the 1st January to the 31st December (inclusive), 1937, in accordance with Article 19 (12) of the Sanitary Officers' Order, 1922.

Having been relieved during the year of the duties of rent collector, I have been able to put more time to Sanitary Duties, which had hitherto been curtailed through lack of time to attend to them.

NUISANCES AND COMPLAINTS.

Defective Cess Pits	9
Offensive Accumulations	5*
Fouled Watercourses	3
Dirty Premises	6
Bad or Suspected Water Supply	5
Overcrowding	2
Animals kept in Unfit Places	4
Defective Sanitary Conveniences	8
Housing Complaints	22†
Miscellaneous	14
Sewage and Drainage	26
Total	104

* Other than cowsheds.

† In addition to those mentioned under Housing Defects.

126 visits were made in connection with these, and with the exception of two were remedied without the necessity of issuing Statutory Notices.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

1. **Meat.**—Two Slaughterhouses were refused Licences on the grounds of unsuitability during the past year, and one discontinued, leaving four Licenced or Registered Slaughterhouses under supervision. These were kept in a cleanly state, and I always find the butchers ready and willing to co-operate with this Department in matters affecting them. The humane killer is used on every animal killed, and experience shows that it makes the butcher's work of slaughtering easier, and for the animals themselves a painless death.

The quality of the meat killed is very high indeed and the slaughtering of bovines which have born a calf is a rare occurrence. The maximum age has been three years.

Occasional slaughtering is a big problem in a large and scattered area such as this, and it is doubtful, in spite of repeated warnings in the Press, if more than 50 per cent. of these are notified. A law prohibiting this type of slaughtering seems the only satisfactory way of stopping it.

RECORD OF INSPECTIONS.

Routine Visits	403
Occasional Slaughtering	56

NUMBER OF CARCASES INSPECTED DURING THE YEAR.

Bovines.	Calves.	Pigs.	Sheep.
246	18	217	890

Total Carcases Inspected 1371

MEAT UNFIT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION.

	Whole carcase.	Fore quarter.	Hind quarter.	Heads.	Lungs.	Livers.	Hearts.	Spleens.	Mes-enteric fats.
Bovines .	–	–	–	–	1	7	–	–	–
Calves ...	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Pigs ...	–	–	–	11	5	2	–	–	9
Sheep ...	3	–	–	–	–	8	–	–	–
Total ...	3	–	–	11	6	17	–	–	9

SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT, 1933.

Eleven persons are Licenced under this Act.

2. Milk.—Details of Inspections for the past year are set out as follows:—

Cowshed and Dairy visits	120
Attention was drawn to the following:—	
Defective Floors	22
Defective Drainage	28
Limewashing	41
Dirty Floors	67
Fouled Approach Yards	50
Total	208

Water supplies to most of the cowsheds constitute a problem, especially as the occupier and not the owner is responsible for improvements. Until the Milk and Dairies Orders are amended to make all improvements in this connection the duty of the landlord I am afraid the progress will be slow in this and other work in connection with cowsheds, but at the same time every effort is being made by my Council to carry out their duties under the Act.

There are two Certified T.T. and one Accredited Dairy in the District, and the standard of the samples obtained from them have been very high. Samples for Tubercle Bacilli were taken at regular intervals from different parts of the District, and all were reported free from infection.

12 Samples taken for Graded Milk	
20 ,, ,, ,, T.B.	
Number of Producers	128
Number of Distributors on the Register divided as follows:—	
(a) Distributors	0
(b) Distributors who are also Producers	128

Judging from the number of samples taken for T.B. in proportion to that for cleanliness it would appear as if the latter was a secondary consideration, more especially as there is no record of ever having had a positive result in this District. I hope during the coming year to have permission to increase the number of Bacteriological Samples for cleanliness.

WATER SUPPLY.

Owing to the very dry summer water supplies required much attention and many of the springs supplying outlying cottages ran dry. All the Council's supplies were, however, sufficient for their requirements, and the only curtailment as to the use of water was made in connection with the washing of cars. My Council have increased the supply for Dulverton and District, which continues to grow year by year, by sinking a borehole 90 feet deep, from which a good and plentiful supply of water can be taken whenever needed. This is put in mainly as an emergency supply and will be of great value should there be a repetition of the summer of 1937 as regards rainfall. From May 1st to August 31st only 6 in. of rain fell in this area. And in October there was no measurable rain.

The amount collected from Water Rates in 1937 was £520 and the number of consumers 424.

A Scheme for the improvement of the Water Supply to the Village of Exford is contemplated by my Council. At present this supply is privately owned, but negotiations are progressing satisfactorily whereby the Trustees will hand over to the R.D.C., it is hoped, free from any debt.

Samples taken from all main supplies were found to be satisfactory.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.—The provision of improved Sanitary Conveniences continues to be enforced through the inspections carried out of working class properties.

SCAVENGING.—There is a Comprehensive House Refuse Collection Scheme on a District basis which works very well indeed, and it is gratifying to note that refuse is stored by householders in properly constructed sanitary bins and not odd boxes as is generally the case.

Disposal is by incineration at the Dulverton Works. All tins are baled by a power press and there is a good market for them.

During the year eight tons were sold. Average price 24/- per ton, F.O.R.

The Refuse Lorry is not kept solely for this work, and when not so employed does other work in connection with this Department.

During 1937 the number of miles covered was 6,616.

Cost of petrol consumed £47 15s. 0d.

Cost of oil used ..... £4 9s. 5d.

Running costs per mile for two ton vehicle, including tax and insurance but less wages, 3.2d.

Tons of refuse collected 364 tons.

Average cost per ton for collection and disposal, 13/8 per ton.

HOUSING.—As will be seen from the records given, housing during 1937 again claimed much attention. My Council have done much useful work in this connection in consequence of informal action by their Officers without the necessity of the service of Statutory Notices.

Housing Statistics.

Number of New Houses erected during the year:

1. With State Assistance—

(a) By the Local Authority	10
(b) By other bodies or persons	—
(c) Otherwise	12

HOUSING INSPECTIONS.

1.	(a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	305
	(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	473
2.	(a) Number of dwelling houses (included under sub-head (a) above) which were inspected and reported under The Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	0
	(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	0
3.	Number of dwelling houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	9
4.	Number of dwelling houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	106

HOUSING ACTION.

Number of defective dwelling houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	71

No Notices were served under Sections 17, 18 or 23 of the Housing Act, 1930.

Number of undertakings given not to occupy	9
Houses demolished	3

HOUSING (RURAL WORKERS') ACTS.

Two applications were received under the above Acts for grants and these were approved.

For a variety of reasons I consider it much better to build new cottages instead of patching old ones. The £100 grant towards the cost of new agricultural cottages would be far more economical than the present system.

Bye Laws Relating to Housing, Etc.

There is no Town Planning Scheme in force in the Area.

The Ribbon Development Act is controlled by the County Council.

SEWERAGE DISPOSAL AND DRAINAGE.

A Scheme is in preparation for the Village of Exford, and it is hoped to have it ready for the Ministry's approval early in the year.

Every house in the Village of Brushford now has a satisfactory drainage system.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

At the request of the Medical Officer of Health enquiries into all reported cases of infectious diseases were at once carried out:—

Number of Premises Visited	10
Number of Rooms Disinfected	10

FACTORY AND WORKSHOPS ACTS.

There are 75 Factories and Workshops on the Register and 37 visits of Inspection were made as follows:—

Premises	Inspections.	Written Notices.	Prosecutions.
Workshops	20	0	0
Work Places	5	0	0
Factories	11	0	0
Totals	36	0	0

No case was referred to H.M. Factories Inspector.

PLANS AND NEW BUILDINGS.

The total number of Plans presented during 1937 was 36, as follows:—

New Houses	22
Alterations and Additions to Houses	8
Miscellaneous	6
Total	36

The number of visits made in connection with the work was 147.

RATS AND MICE DESTRUCTION ACT, 1919.

Every effort has been made to get people to keep down rats and mice and my Council supply rat poison at a nominal charge to the public to encourage destruction all the year round.

The Council have no refuse dumps, consequently no action on their part is necessary.

PETROLEUM ACTS.

Petroleum Licences granted during the year	26
Amount collected in fees	£16-15-0

SUMMARY OF INSPECTIONS FOR THE YEAR.

Housing Inspections	473
Housing Reinspections	694
Inspection of Meat and other Foods	459
Cowsheds and Dairies	120
Factories and Workshops	37
Infectious Diseases	10
Visits in connection with Nuisances and Complaints	211
Visits in connection with Rats and Mice	43
Miscellaneous visits:	
Milk Sampling, Water Sampling, etc.	87
Water Supplies and Sewage Disposal, &c.	317
Total Calls	2451

CONCLUSION.

I desire once again to express my thanks to the Chairman, Councillors and Medical Officer for their consideration and support given me during the past year, also to the Clerk and his staff for their co-operation in the work of this Department.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

HORACE A. JEWELL,

Sanitary Surveyor and Inspector.

Dulverton,

Somerset.

January, 1938.